

Resolution Proposed by Jackie Goldberg, LAUSD Board Agenda, Sept. 3, 2019.

Ms. Goldberg – Ensuring Support for Students at All Los Angeles Unified School District Schools (Res-011-19/20) (For Action October 1, 2019)

Whereas, The value of a public school cannot be quantified in a single, summative rating, which can shame, penalize, or stigmatize schools, education professionals, students, and entire communities;

Whereas, School ratings promote unhealthy competition between schools, exacerbate community antagonisms by producing artificial “winners” and “losers”, and penalize schools that serve socio-economically disadvantaged student populations;

Whereas, It is well-understood that the academic achievement gap continues to be perpetuated by socio-economic and socio-emotional factors;

Whereas, School ranking systems that prioritize student performance on standardized tests fail to adequately take into account socio-economic and socio-emotional factors that influence school needs and are reflected in the academic achievement levels of students;

Whereas, Research indicates that online school performance ratings exacerbate economic and social segregation in the United States, accelerating divergences in housing values, income distributions, education levels, and the racial and ethnic composition of communities;

Whereas, On April 3, 2018, the Governing Board of the Los Angeles Unified School District adopted Achieving Excellence for All: Establishing a Framework for Continuous Improvement (Res-036-17/18), which called for the development of a School Performance Framework (SPF) that would enable the District “to identify and track the overall performance of each school annually” and “evaluate all schools with a uniform set of measures”;

Whereas, The proposed SPF presented to the Board on November 13, 2018, heavily relies on Value-Added “Growth” modeling, a technique subject to variability and error, which is therefore inappropriate for high-stakes evaluations resulting in rankings, categorization, or absolute comparisons;

Whereas, The proposed SPF seeks to distill the natural and inherent complexity of a school community into a single, summative rating;

Whereas, Identifying schools and students meeting or not meeting proficiency level benchmarks to inform the provision of support and resources is a task already conducted by District administrators, principals, and teachers on an almost daily basis; and

Whereas, Rather than having to implement a school ranking system, the Superintendent and Local District Superintendents should be permitted to focus on addressing the academic achievement gap experienced by students from socioeconomically disadvantaged communities lacking financial, political, and social capital; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Los Angeles Unified School District suspend implementation of the SPF and any launching or utilization of the SPF—including any use of stars, scores, or any other rating system—in or on any District platforms until a more in-depth analysis of the SPF’s metrics is conducted by the members of the Governing Board of the Los Angeles Unified School District and/or an ad-hoc committee to understand the implications and impact of the SPF on District schools and their residing neighborhoods;

Resolved further, That the District further the goal of giving students, parents, school employees, and the general public more information about District schools by including important and wide-ranging types of data from the California Department of Education’s California School Dashboard on its website in an accessible fashion;

Resolved further, That the District will provide parents with a guide and workshops on how to utilize the California School Dashboard;

Resolved further, That the District collaborate with the California Department of Education to improve the California School Dashboard based on school community and parent feedback;

Resolved further, That Local District personnel work closely with the administrators and teachers of schools with large numbers of students experiencing difficulties meeting or exceeding state standards to help increase the number of students meeting and exceeding state standards at these schools;

Resolved further, The funds designated to implement the SPF be equitably distributed according to need between: (i) Local Area Districts tasked with identifying schools that serve high concentrations of high-needs students experiencing difficulty performing academically; and (ii) supports that can be provided to increase academic performance among those students; and, be it finally

Resolved, That the schools, both District and charter, that have similar locations, grade-level spans and socioeconomic status, convene each spring to reciprocally share “best practices,” in a collaborative all-schools meeting facilitated by Local Area Districts dedicated to encouraging cross-school communication that stimulates successful innovation and learning for all our students.